

STEREO

MCD 71378

Greetings from

HOLLAND

Monitor presents Dutch Songs featuring Mieke and Nina



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INTRODUCTION

The official name of Holland is Kingdom of the Netherlands. Half its people dwell below the level of the sea, because for almost ten centuries the Dutch have been creating their land – stealing it from the sea and lakes and marshes.

It is the land of tulips, dikes and wooden shoes. Wide canals wind through green lowlands; farms and pastures stretch for miles without a hill. Windmills, their giant cloth sails picking up every breeze, guard the lowland reclaimed from the sea. These polders are protected from inundation by dunes and dikes. The Dutch have had to build many dams to keep the rivers and canals in their course, and this is why so many Dutch cities end in "dam."

The traditional dress is different in every province, but is fast disappearing in younger generations. The people in the farmlands and fishing villages still wear *klompen* (wooden shoes). Each village that clings to its past has its own traditional costume. Those in the know can not only tell where a woman lives by her clothing, but whether she is a Catholic or Protestant, married or single.

1. FUIFLIEDJES (Medley of Three Merry Songs) (2:30)

A spirited medley of three convivial songs. The first is a sports rally song, the second a wedding verse, and the third is sung in the spirit of general good-fellowship.

2. MARKT LIEDJE (Market Song) (2:21)

This well-known old folksong tells of the farmer who has loaded his wagon for market. On his first trip he takes old men who begin fighting among themselves. Never again, he vows. Next trip he brings old women who do nothing but nag all the way. No more, says he. Finally he loads his wagon with a bevy of young girls and finds to his delight that they laugh and sing all the way to market. The farmer resolves henceforth to transport only gay young cargo.

3. DE MOLEN (The Windmill) 2:00

A perennial favorite of all parties and gatherings. The windmill in this song is the scene of the lover's first meeting. Here they plan to marry, with the entire village joining in the festivities; here also they plan to make their home, for the place where the windmill stands is wreathed in memories.

4. KINDER POTPOURRI (Medley of Children's Songs) 8:35

These are the games and melodies remembered from childhood. Most of them, although handed down through generations of folk song tradition, are still sung by all Dutch children. As some are fragmentary bits in themselves, we have strung them into a medley of ten.

5. HET KWEZELKE 2:00

This song originated in the early 17th century and is best known in the southern provinces and in Flanders. A *kwezel* is a type of self-styled nun, not affiliated with any convent or sect, bent on impressing the world with good deeds. The *kwezel*, wishing to enter Heaven, encounters St. Peter who is disgusted by her whining tales of self-praise and promptly dispatches her below. There she is met by Lucifer who firmly declares that Hell accommodates only honest sinners, not hypocrites, and that she and 100,000 of her ilk would probably do the least harm in purgatory.

6. KOPPESTOK DE VEERMAN (Legend of the Sea Pilot) 1:46

The province of Den Briel (Brielle) has a long seafaring tradition; most of its inhabitants are fishermen or sea

pilots. Captured following a bloody massacre of its burghers by the armies of the Duke of Alva for King Philip of Spain, this province was reclaimed for the Prince of Orange in 1572, by the *Geuzen*, (Sea Beggars), a brave band of privateers who raided the Dutch coast and routed the Spanish ships. Here is the well-loved song depicting that historical encounter and honoring Koppestok, its legendary hero.

7. WILHELMUS VAN NASSOUWEN 1:38

(Netherlands National Anthem)

Widely acknowledged as the oldest in existence, it was composed by Jonkheer Philip van Marnix, Lord of Sint Aldegonde in honor of William, Prince of Orange and Count of Nassau. It commemorates the name and fame of this most illustrious ruler and the most stirring period in Netherlands history.

8. HET KLOOSTER VAN SINT ARJAAN 2:15

(The Cloister of Saint Arjaan)

For a young man in certain parts of Holland to suggest to his sweetheart that she accompany him to the Cloister of Saint Arjaan is equivalent to a marriage proposal, for, as he points out, two pair of shoes are under each bed there. The wily maiden of this song, feigning ignorance of this situation, adroitly leads her young man to the suggestion.

9. TULPEN UIT AMSTERDAM (Tulips from Amsterdam) 2:00

We first heard this continental melody on board a ship of the Holland-America Line which introduces its passengers to a variety of Dutch music, current and traditional. This ballad is as much a favorite of every crossing as it is with street-corner musicians.

10. SINT NICOLAAS POTPOURRI (St. Nicholas Medley) 4:51

A medley of melodies sung by Dutch children as they herald the advent of St. Nicholas whose legendary arrival is on December 5th from Spain by ship. He is on a white horse and is accompanied by the Moor, *Zwarte Piet*, who has kept behavior records on all children and distributes coal or goodies accordingly. That night, riding over the rooftops, they leave gifts in the *klompen* (wooden sabots) which have been placed on the hearth in eager anticipation.

11. WIEN NEDERLANDS BLOED 2:00

Although this is not the national anthem, it ranks high in the spirit of patriotism, heralding as it does the Netherlander's fierce pride in his heritage, royal ruler and country.

12. HANS EN TRIENEKE 2:55

A merry little waltz clog. Hans pleads, "Come now, Trieneke, dance with me, and I'll not ever glance again at the other girls!" To this, Trieneke replies, "Very well, Hans... and if a wedding ring comes with that offer, I'll dance with you the rest of my life." This was written for and dedicated to Mieke's father by its composer, his colleague and dear friend, Jos. Reckers.

13. DE ZILVEREN VLOOT (The Silver Fleet) 2:25

A gay historical tribute, this song is alternately referred to as *PIET HEIN* after its hero, the gallant Dutch admiral of the India Company who in 1628 captured the notorious "Silver Fleet" of Spain with its cargo of 12 million florins. A monument has been erected to the little admiral in the Oude Kerk Delft, bearing the following inscription in Latin: "Like a new Argonaut, he fetched from the new Colchis the golden fleece of the King of Spain."

14. WILT HEDEN NU TREDEN (Traditional Hymn of Thanksgiving) 2:07

No matter what their individual religious denominations, the people of the Netherlands are decidedly united as a God-fearing nation. Every solemn occasion is accordingly marked by a carillon rendition of this beautiful hymn. Originally taken from the centuries-old "Gedenck-Clanck," of Valerius, it has been translated now into many tongues, and has been adopted as a universal hymn of thanksgiving.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

MIEKE Duberta, born in New York City, owes her Dutch and musical heritage to her Holland-born parents, opera stars Gerard Duberta and Maria Gimbrère. As a child she studied the cello and was well on the way to becoming a concert cellist when she decided to study voice with her parents and follow in their career footsteps. Mieke now sings in twelve languages, of which she speaks five, and is a veteran of opera, concert, radio and television.

NINA Dunkel, also a native of New York City, has won highest honors for her harp playing in National and State Federation of Music Clubs competitions, and has appeared in concerts, recitals and as symphony soloist throughout the United States. Nina speaks four languages, and while at the Ecoles d'Art Americaines in Fontainebleau, France, she was awarded the coveted Prix Lili Boulanger.

A number of the folksongs in this album are remembered from Mieke's childhood. Since they have been handed down for generations, some have no known composer or definite date of origin, and to this they owe their interesting and sometimes erratic variations of tempo, as well as their intrinsic simplicity and unique flavor. The anthems and patriotic songs are sung using the original 14th Century Dutch text.

Jacques van der Valk, accordion.
Jerry Silverman, mandolin/guitar

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Cover Design: David Chasman

Cover Photo: Leonard Heicklen / Three Lions

Volendam costumes courtesy of Netherlands National Tourist Office (ANVV)

Troubadour Harp by Lyon and Healy

Tulips flown from Amsterdam via KLM Royal Dutch Airlines

Background specially designed by Dunkel Studio Assoc., Inc.

All musical arrangements and explanatory notes by Mieke and Nina.

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MIEKE, Vocal Solos
NINA, Harp

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